

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA San Diego, California

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For Immediate Release

CARETAKER OF CALEXICO RESIDENCE WHERE NARCOTICS TUNNEL WAS DISCOVERED PLEADS GUILTY IN FEDERAL COURT

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - May 23, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that yesterday Antonio Morales-Barrios, the caretaker of the Calexico residence where a narcotics tunnel was found by federal law enforcement agents, pled guilty to possession of 1,143 pounds of marijuana, with intent to distribute, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1). Morales-Barrios tendered his guilty plea in federal court before United States Magistrate Judge Anthony J. Battaglia, subject to final acceptance by United States District Court Judge Marilyn L. Huff at the time of sentencing.

As part of his plea, Morales-Barrios admitted that he drove a pick-up truck containing the bulk marijuana and delivered it to another person, Jesus Aguila-Agundez. According to court documents, the Drug Enforcement Administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal

Investigation, and United States Border Patrol found a narcotics tunnel located at 932 East 2nd Street, Calexico, California, following an investigation. On September 15, 2006, agents observed Morales-Barrios driving a truck containing approximately 1,143 pounds of marijuana leave 932 East 2nd Street, Calexico, California, where the tunnel was located. Morales-Barrios then transferred the truck to Jesus Aguila-Agundez, who was at a nearby swap meet and who was subsequently stopped by law enforcement officers. Morales-Barrios was arrested on March 6, 2007 by federal authorities pursuant to an arrest warrant issued following the discovery of the narcotics tunnel.

According to Sherri Walker Hobson, who is prosecuting the case, Morales-Barrios is facing a five-year minimum mandatory sentence with a maximum of 40 years in custody at the time of his sentence.

The next hearing date for Morales-Barrios is September 2, 2008, at 9:00 a.m., before the Honorable Marilyn L. Huff for sentencing.

DEFENDANTS

Antonio Morales-Barrios

Case Number: 07cr0871H In Custody
Pending Sentencing 9/2/08 at 9:00 a.m.

Jesus Aguila-Agundez

Case Number: 06cr02220H In Custody
Received 60-month sentence on August 6, 2007

SUMMARY OF CHARGE AGAINST MORALES-BARRIOS

Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1) - Possession of Marijuana (1,143 pounds)
With Intent To Distribute

Penalties: 5 year minimum mandatory to 40 years in custody; 4 years of supervised release, \$1,000,000 fine

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Drug Enforcement Administration
Internal Revenue Service
United States Border Patrol